

minimum of two weeks' annual leave each year. In the few cases where normal Public Service leave conditions did not apply in the Public Service, the benefits of the Annual Holidays Act have been granted. Many public servants still receive, after ten years' service, annual holidays amounting to three weeks, as against the two weeks provided in the Act.

(d) *Sick-leave Benefits.*—For many years the sick-leave provisions of the Public Service Regulations have provided for leave on full pay for a specified period according to an officer's service and a further period on half-pay if required. The effect has been, in the case of lower-paid officers, that when they have exhausted their leave on full pay and are required to have half-pay they are precluded from obtaining the sickness benefits under the Social Security Act. In this respect it was felt that public servants should be no differently placed from other members of the community, and the sick-leave regulations were amended so that the half-pay provision was converted to full pay—that is, two days' half-pay was converted into one day's full pay. This would enable an officer to take all his sick-leave entitlement on full pay and then, if necessary, claim the sickness benefit under the Social Security Act for absence after full pay ceases to be paid.

(e) *Amalgamation of Class VI and VII in the Clerical and Professional Divisions.*—For some years there has been almost automatic promotion from Class VII to Class VI after a normal rest of two years at the top of Class VII or, in the case of more promising officers, after one year's rest. The classes have, in actual practice, been to some extent amalgamated, and it was considered desirable to amend the scale to provide for the elimination of Class VII and the full salary range of the old Classes VII and VI to be known as Class VI. The former practice lead to certain anomalies through officers gaining technical seniority. Under the Public Service Act, seniority becomes important where officers are considered equally suitable and efficient for promotion. The effect of the amalgamation of the two classes eliminates the possibility of anomalies being created through an officer attaining such technical seniority.

THE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

In November, 1944, the Public Service Association expressed a wish to be heard during the settlement of new salary scales which could be used as the basis for the next general regrading of the Public Service. A Consultative Committee to undertake the preparation of new scales, and on which the Association would be represented, was suggested. The principle of such a Committee was agreed to, on the understanding that it could be effective only if the Government agreed to a revision of scales consistent with its policy of stabilization.

The Association raised this question in an interview with the Prime Minister in February of this year, and it was subsequently announced that Government had agreed to the setting-up of a Consultative Committee. The Committee was then constituted under the Chairmanship of the Commissioner, and consists of the Assistant Commissioner, Mr. G. T. Bolt; the Secretary to this Office, Mr. L. A. Atkinson; a senior Inspector, Mr. J. E. Engel; and Messrs. A. H. O'Keefe, J. P. Lewin, J. K. Hunn, and J. Turnbull, representing the Public Service Association.

Subsequently the Railways Tribunal announced its findings, and at the same time the Prime Minister stated that the increases recommended for the Railways Service would also be applied to the general Public Service. The first task of the Consultative Committee was then to consider the detailed application of the Railway Tribunal's findings to the Public Service and particularly to the large and complex groups of employees who had no counterpart in the Railways Service. This task was completed and the revised scales were settled in time to permit of the payment of arrears of salary, dating back to 30th June, 1944, before 31st March, 1945.

The Committee has now begun its main task of devising a new salary scale to meet the needs of present-day conditions. The work will involve the careful consideration of all conditions governing the assessment of Public Service salaries and the gathering and sifting of information on the duties and responsibilities of the many varied types of occupations within the present-day Public Service. It is anticipated that it will be some months before a final report will be available.

BOARD OF APPEAL

Three sessions of the Public Service Board of Appeal were held during the year. The number of appeals against non-promotion that were heard totalled 197. The decisions of the Board were:—

Allowed	..	..	..	..	..	7
Not allowed	..	..	..	..	..	141
Withdrawn	..	..	..	..	..	48
Did not lie	..	..	..	..	..	1

The Board consists of two members appointed by the Government (one being the Chairman) and two members elected by public servants. During the year a Government member, Mr. J. H. Jerram, I.S.O., formerly Permanent Head of the State Fire Insurance Office, retired and it was necessary to replace him on the Board of Appeal. Mr. C. J. Playne, Assistant Public Trustee, Wellington, was appointed to the position. Also during the year one of the elected members, Mr. J. Turnbull, resigned from the Public Service in order to take up the appointment of General Secretary to the New Zealand Public Service Association. This necessitated the holding of an election, which resulted in the appointment, for the remainder of the present term of office, of Mr. P. B. Wright, of the Lands and Survey Department, Auckland.

RETIREMENTS

The relaxation in the retirement policy which was given effect to during the previous year was continued. The retention of staff who would otherwise have retired has had the effect of reducing the opportunities for promotion for other officers. This naturally causes a certain amount of dissatisfaction and has been the subject of strong representations from the employees' organization. No